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RISHI SUNAK WINS 2ND ROUND OF VOTING IN RACE FOR UK PM

The former British finance minister came top with 101 votes, followed by junior trade minister Penny Mordaunt (83 votes)

BRAVERMAN KNOCKED OUT, 5 HOPEFULS REMAIN

Foreign Secretary Liz Truss came third with 64 votes. Lawmaker Tom Tugendhat received 32 votes and Kemi Badenoch 49 votes. There are now five candidates in the fray, after Attorney General Suella Braverman of Goan descent was knocked out of the race on Thursday with 27 votes. She failed to reach the 30-vote threshold in the second round | P12

THIRD ROUND ON MONDAY, LAST ON JULY 21

- The third round of voting by Conservative members of parliament will take place on Monday. If everybody reaches the 30-vote barrier, then the one with the lowest vote count will be dropped
- Subsequent ballots will eliminate the candidate with the lowest votes each time, to whittle the field down to a final two by July 21

200,000

TORIES WILL CHOOSE THE NEW LEADER FROM THE FINAL TWO CANDIDATES ON SEPT 5

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Engineering errors, human intervention to blame for landslides: Experts

BOSKY KHANNA @ Bengaluru

IN a shocking revelation, the series of recent landslides during heavy rain in the ghat sections and hilly country areas adjoining roads in Karnataka is being blamed on engineers not sticking to basic engineering principles rather than the common villain called deforestation.

According to experts, engineers are not implementing what they studied in their semesters on road engineering. While undertaking road widening works in the ghats, especially country roads (now part of state and national highways), the slopes need to be cut in such a way that the natural angles and inclines are not disturbed. But engineers cut them vertically. This loosens the soil and affects tree roots which hold the soil in place, in turn leading to landslides during heavy rain.

Prof G Madhavi Latha, Department of Civil Engineering, Indian Institute of Science (IISc), told The New Indian Express that while natural reasons also lead to landslides, there are engineering methods to check it, like nailing the soil, nets being anchored to slopes and ensuring plants/trees are not uprooted. Each terrain has a different solution, but it's not implemented.

Engineering errors are found to be the cause of landslides. They do not check the slope angles. The materials used on hilly terrain to control landslides are also a problem. Ideally, rocks should be used, but due to availability and cost they are not. So a combination of clay and sand can be used, depending upon the region.

A senior National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) official, while requesting anonymity, admitted: "Slopes to grades must be maintained, but that is not done. Inspection of roads is also not being done," the official said. P4

A bus crosses a landslide-hit road near Donigal on Mangaluru-Bengaluru NH 75 | EXPRESS

Daler Mehndi in police custody | PTI

Daler arrested for trafficking as court upholds sentence

HARPREET BAJWA @ Chandigarh

POPULAR Punjabi pop singer Daler Mehndi was on Thursday arrested after a Patiala court upheld a sentence of two years in jail in a 19-year-old case of human trafficking.

Mehndi was sent to the Patiala Central Jail where cricketer-turned-politician Navjot Singh Sidhu and former minister Bikram Majitha are lodged. His lawyer L M Gulati said, "We will immediately move a higher court with an appeal."

A trial court had in 2018 held Mehndi and his sibling Shamsher Singh guilty of illegally sending people abroad in the guise of members of his troupe, charging hefty sums for human smuggling, and sentenced them to two years in jail. Shamsher Singh died in 2017. Mehndi was granted bail and later filed an appeal in the sessions court. Additional District and Sessions Judge H S Grewal on Thursday held Mehndi guilty under Section 420 and 120B of the IPC.

A case was registered against the brothers on September 19, 2003 by Sadar police station in Patiala on a complaint filed by one Bakshish Singh and 35 others over alleged fraud. Singh claimed he had paid the singer ₹12 lakh for smuggling him to Canada but the latter failed to honour the deal. Daler had taken two troupes in 1998 and 1999 during which 10 people were taken to the US as group members and 'dropped off' illegally. In 2006, the police filed two discharge petitions claiming Mehndi was innocent but the trial court had rejected them.

GOTA GONE FOR GOOD

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

WITH embattled Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa emailing his resignation letter from Singapore on Thursday, the drama around his political exile finally came to an end. Protesters cheered his exit, as Gotabaya was the last of the powerful Rajapaksa clan to bow out of office following an unprecedented mass uprising.

There was tenuous calm in Colombo as thousands of protesters changed tack and vacated government buildings they had occupied since July 9.

The business of government formation, too, gathered pace as the Opposition set a timeline for choosing a new prime ministerial candidate, saying a consensus name will be announced by Friday 10 am. The decision was made known by the Samagi Jana Balawegaya, the biggest Opposition party.

Its member of Parliament Harsha De Silva tweeted, "Responding to request by PM @RW_UNP to @ParliamentLK Speaker to propose a name by consensus for PM, opposition parties will today discuss with various parties and groups in government to get such consensus. We will propose this name to Speaker at 10am tomorrow. #SriLankaCrisis."

While Gotabaya mailed his resignation letter to Speaker Mahinda Yapa Abeywardena, the latter's office was fact-checking it. The Speaker's media secretary Indunil Abeywardena said it was received through the Sri Lanka High Commission in Singapore.

"The Speaker wishes to inform that an official statement on this would be made tomorrow (Friday) after the verification process and legal formalities," Abeywardena said. The Speaker wants to see the original signature. The original will be brought to Colombo from Singapore in the next available flight by a diplomatic officer.

Maldives unexpectedly jumped into the resignation drama with Speaker Mohamed Nasheed tweeting, "Sri Lankan President GR has resigned. I hope Sri Lanka can now move forward." Nasheed had negotiated his escape to Male. P12

Protesters celebrate the resignation of Gotabaya Rajapaksa in Colombo | AFP

Lands in Singapore, doesn't seek asylum

Gotabaya Rajapaksa and his entourage boarded SV 788 at Male in Maldives and left for Singapore. Singapore's foreign ministry said he was allowed to enter the city-state on a private visit, adding he had not sought political asylum. There was speculation that he will later leave for Saudi Arabia

Fertiliser supply to India hit by Ukraine war

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

UNION MINISTER for Chemicals and Fertilisers, Mansukh Mandaviya said on Thursday that the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war has hit the supply of fertilisers which has resulted in the increase in its prices. Speaking to reporters in Bengaluru, the minister, however, said the Centre is taking measures to ensure that farmers are not impacted by it.

"There is difficulty in bringing raw materials available in Russia and Ukraine including diammonium phosphate along with nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium urea fertiliser. China has reduced its production of fertilisers. Urea and complex fertiliser prices have increased. However, PM Narendra Modi has instructed the ministry to ensure that the farmers are not impacted by the crisis and also instructed us that there should not be any shortage in supply of fertilisers," he said. To ensure prices in international market will not have any impact on farmers, the prices of DAP, NPK and urea fertilisers have not been changed despite hike in price of raw materials, he added.

Earlier, speaking at the National Conference of State Agriculture and Horticulture Ministers, Mandaviya appealed to all governments to popularise nano fertiliser developed in India which can be a replacement for fertilisers which are imported. P4

Platform of Platforms for farmers launched

Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar on Thursday launched improvised e-NAM (Platform of Platforms) that seeks to integrate APMC market yards to create a unified market. P4

EXPRESS READ

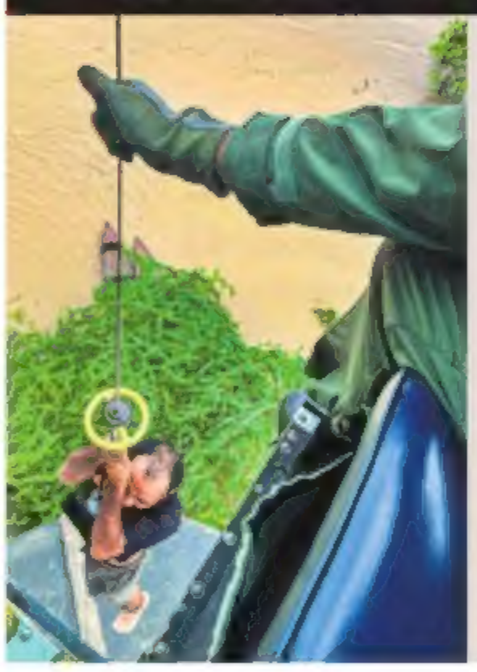
Death of kickboxer sparks debate on safety

Bengaluru: Twenty-three-year-old S Nikhil from Mysuru died on Wednesday after sustaining injuries during a bout at K1 Kickboxing championship in Bengaluru. Nikhil's family members and general secretary of the Karnataka Kickboxing Association blamed lack of safety measures at the venue | P3

Khadi unit in Hubballi rues flag amendment

Hubballi: The Centre's amendment to the flag code which allows flags made of polyester to be hoisted, but not khadi, has not got down well with the only BIS-certified khadi national flag making unit in Hubballi. Last year, the unit had received 90 lakh orders, as compared to just 14 lakh this year | P5

GODAVARI AIRLIFT



An Air Force helicopter rescues a person stuck atop a water tank near Somanpalli village in Mancherial district of Telangana on Thursday amid the swollen Godavari. In all, two persons were rescued in the IAF mission. Andhra Pradesh, too, is on the brink of its worst flood after 36 years as the Godavari is turning ferocious, threatening to inundate many villages mostly in West Godavari and Konaseema districts | SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

CASES UP

K'taka govt mulls making masks must

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

THE state government is planning to make wearing of masks mandatory at public places and also impose penalties on those not wearing them in Bengaluru. This is being planned as the number of Covid-19 cases in the state capital is rising, said Health Minister Dr K Sudhakar on Thursday.

The minister said although the number of Covid-19 positive patients admitted to hospitals has fallen significantly, people should not be complacent, and should take precautionary measures.

Also as part of precautionary measures, the Union government on Wednesday announced free booster dose vaccination for people who are above 18 years. "We have already discussed this for Karnataka and plan to go for aggressive vaccination drives," he said.

The minister said people had become complacent and were not wearing masks even as the cases are on the rise. P3

PSI scam: Paul's custody ends today

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

SENIOR IPS officer and Additional Director General of Police **Amrit Paul**'s police custody was extended by three days till July 15, by the first additional chief metropolitan magistrate court. Paul was produced before the court on Wednesday.

The officer was arrested on July 4 in the police sub-inspector (PSI) recruitment scam. The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) has registered four cases, eight FIRs and arrested 80 people in the PSI recruitment scam. Paul, who was ADGP - Recruitment, was arrested in the case pertaining to alleged tampering of OMR sheets of candidates, who had reportedly paid money running into lakhs of rupees to clear the examination.

The prosecution informed the court that former Deputy Superintendent of Police (DySP), Recruitment, Shanta Kumar, who was also arrested in the scam, had handed over Rs 1.3 crore which he had allegedly collected from some PSI aspirants, to some people on Paul's instructions. The prosecution also informed the court that the CID needed the senior IPS officer's custody to recover the said amount.

The agency also stated Paul had shared the password of his mobile phone with the CID only on Wednesday, and they would need a couple of days to retrieve data since the officer had reportedly deleted data and formatted his phone. P4

NATIONWIDE	JULY 13	JULY 14
Fresh cases	16,906	20,139
Recoveries	15,447	16,482
Deaths	45	38
KARNATAKA	JULY 13	JULY 14
Fresh cases	1,231	1,209
Recoveries	1,047	1,072
Deaths	0	1

JAB-O-METER
TAKE YOUR SHOT
July 13: 11,78,456 doses
July 14: 16,32,789 doses
TOTAL DOSES: 1,99,45,72,253

KERALA

INDIA REPORTS FIRST CASE OF MONKEYPOX

Kerala reported the country's first monkeypox case with a 35-year-old man who returned from the UAE testing positive on Thursday. His health condition is stable, said health minister Veena George | P5

New master plan for Hampi: Each village can have up to 10 home stays

KIRAN BALANNANAVAR
@ Hosapete

WITH an aim to generate local employment and boost tourism, the Hampi World Heritage Area Management Authority (HWHAMA) has come out with a master plan for Hampi heritage area and buffer zone as per which each revenue village can have 10 home stay facilities for tourists. The buildings and operations will be monitored by local authorities to ensure that the new structures suit the local environment.

While several local organisations were upset with the administration for the recent crackdown on illegal home stays, the master plan is expected to provide some relief.

HWHAMA has prepared the plan in consultation with Archaeological Survey of India and Unesco. The tenders for other developmental works under the master plan are expected to be called after July 27.

Six villages fall under the core area. About 191.65 sq km is buffer zone, including Anegundi in Koppal district. Also, 246.35 sq km is considered peripheral zone. New developments can come up in these two zones

Siddarameshwara, Commissioner, HWHAMA

Last month, the district administration had shut down 16 illegal home stays and resorts that were operating close to Hampi heritage area. The new home stays that will be allowed under the new master plan will come on the periphery of Hampi heritage area and a few in the buffer zone.

Speaking to TNIE, Tourism Minister Anand Singh B S said that the permission for the new home stays and resorts in the periphery of Hampi heritage area will help boost tourism as well as local employment. "The HWHAMA has been formed to protect and preserve Hampi's heritage and culture. The new structures have to follow the guidelines issued by the HWHAMA and UNESCO," the minister said.

WORD POLICE

New House list of banned words kicks up a storm

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

WHAT is common between *jumlajeevi*, *dohra charitra*, *vinash purash* and *taanashah*? These are among the words identified as unfit for use in Parliament, according to a new list of such words compiled by the Lok Sabha secretariat.

While these are words used by Opposition politicians to target the ruling dispensation, some commonly used words such as 'drama', 'ashamed', 'betrayed', 'abused', 'hypocrisy', 'incompetent', and even 'sexual harassment' have made it to the Lok Sabha secretariat's list.

Expectedly, the move has created a furore ahead of the monsoon session with the Opposition accusing the Centre of issuing a 'gag order'. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla clarified there is nothing new as the list has been periodically compiled since 1954, adding that no word is banned. He said the list is a compilation of words that have been expunged. The Speaker said members are free to express their views while maintaining decorum of the House.

Several words and expressions, even those used commonly, get routinely expunged during legislative proceedings if a member protests and the presiding officer finds them inapt in a particular context.

The LS Secretariat said some words may not be deemed unparliamentary unless read in conjunction with the other expressions spoken during the parliamentary proceedings.

However, the Opposition is unconvinced with several MPs saying they will continue to use these words.

"Ashamed. Abused. Betrayed. Corrupt. Hypocrisy. Incompetent. I will use all these words," said TMC's Rajya Sabha MP Derek O'Brien.

Om Birla, Lok Sabha Speaker